

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Page 1, immediately following the title, please insert the following:

This is the U.S. national phase of International Application No.

PCT/EP03/01634 filed February 18, 2003, the entire disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference.

On page 1, after the title please insert headings as follows:

BACKGROUND OF THE DISCLOSURE

Field of the Disclosure

The paragraph beginning on page 1, line 5 has been changed as follows:

The ~~invention~~ disclosure relates to a medical, in particular dental-medical, handpiece and to a splash guard for the outlet of such a handpiece.

On page 1, line 8 please add a heading as follows:

Related Technology

On page 2, line 28 please add a heading as follows:

SUMMARY

The paragraphs beginning on page 2, line 29 have been changed as follows:

The ~~object of the invention is, with~~ disclosure provides a handpiece or a splash guard of the kinds concerned, to improve the releasable connection between the splash guard and the handpiece. In particular there is to be attained greater stability of the connection and security of the connection with regard to an unintended release of

the connection. Thereby, the releasability should be fundamentally unaffected and if possible likewise improved, in order to ensure a handling-friendly mounting or release of the splash guard.

~~This object is achieved by means of the features of claim 1 or 7 or 15.~~

~~Advantageous further developments of the invention are indicated in the associated subclaims.~~

On page 3, line 10 please insert headings and paragraphs as follows:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Below, advantageous configurations of the disclosure will be described in more detail with reference to preferred exemplary embodiments. ~~There is shown~~

Fig. 1 - a medical or dental-medical handpiece in accordance with the disclosure, having a splash guard, which is releasably connected with a cannula of the handpiece;

Fig. 2 - the cannula in an enlarged representation, in longitudinal section;

Fig. 3 - the splash guard as an individual part, in axial section;

Fig. 4 - the end region of a cannula and a splash guard in modified configuration, in axial section;

Fig. 5 - the cannula and the splash guard according to Fig. 4, in a direction of view towards the outlet;

Fig. 6 - the end region of a cannula and a splash guard in a further modified configuration;

Fig. 7 - the cannula in the splash guard according to Fig. 6, in a direction of view towards the outlet;

Fig. 8 - the end region of a cannula and a splash guard in a further modified configuration, in axial section;

Fig. 9 - the cannula and the splash guard according to Fig. 8, in a direction of view towards the outlet;

Fig. 10 - the end region of a cannula and a splash guard in a further modified configuration, in axial section;

Fig. 11 - the cannula and the splash guard according to Fig. 10, in a direction of view towards the outlet;

Fig. 12 - the end region of a cannula and a splash guard releasably fixed thereon, in modified configuration, in axial section;

Fig. 13 - a splash guard according to Fig. 12, in a direction of view towards its outlet;

Fig. 14 - the splash guard according to Fig. 12, in a view from the front;

Fig. 15 - the splash guard according to Fig. 12, in a view from the exterior;

Fig. 16 - the end region of a cannula and a splash guard, in axial section in a further modified configuration;

Fig. 17 - the end region of a cannula and a splash guard releasably fixed thereon in a further modified configuration, in section;

Fig. 18 - the end region of a cannula and a splash guard releasably fixed thereon, in further modified configuration, in axial partial section.

In the case of the exemplary embodiments described below, the same or similar parts are provided with the same reference signs.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The paragraph beginning on page 3, line 11 has been changed as follows:

In the case of the a first configuration in accordance with the invention according to claim 1 there is provided a latching device for connecting the splash guard with the handpiece, which is effective due to the elastic yieldability of a spring tongue. Due to the elastic yieldability, the splash guard can be pushed over the thickening of the latching body with a pushing force which can easily be applied manually, whereby the spring tongue bends outwards and in the latching disposition the at least one latching nose engages behind the undercut of the latching body. Through this, the security of the connection is improved in comparison with the known configurations. For releasing the splash guard there is required a certain easily applied pulling force, which overcomes the latching, whereby the latching nose is self-actingly moved or expanded into its open disposition.

The paragraphs beginning on page 4, line 1 have been changed as follows:

Within the scope of the invention disclosure, the spring tongue and/or the latching nose may be configured in the form of a slotted ring or it may be formed as a segment, whereby also a plurality of spring tongues with latching noses, e.g. two or three, may be arranged opposite to one another in a segment form. Both for a ring-shaped latching nose and also for at least one segment-form latching nose it is advantageous to produce the pipe-form body of the splash guard or the latter in its entirety of a material of slight elastic expansion, but having an elastic flexibility, e.g. of plastics material, which makes possible a simple, rapid and economical production, in particular then when the splash guard is an injected molded part.

The above described advantages apply also for a splash guard in accordance with the invention according to independent claim 7.

A particularly advantageous configuration is then provided when the latching body has a ball-form or ball-section-form thickening, which the splash guard engages over and behind elastically. Such a rounded thickening provides at the same time a ramp-like introduction surface between the at least one latching nose and the latching body, which brings about a self-actuated movement of the latching nose upon the plugging together and thereby moves the latter into the release position. When, thereby, the surface of the one or the plurality of latching noses is adapted to the convex form of the spring tongues, there is provided beyond this a stable connection with a firm seating.

The paragraphs beginning on page 5, line 22 have been changed as follows:

~~The invention thus further has the object of improving a splash guard in accordance with the preamble of claim 11 or claim 13 with regard to its adaptability to the treatment site and/or to differing treatments.~~

~~This object is achieved by means of the features in claim 11. Advantageous further developments of the invention are indicated in the associated subclaims.~~

~~In the case of another embodiment, the splash guard in accordance with the invention according to claim 11, the guard body is rotatably mounted around its longitudinal axis, and thus the guard body can be rotated into particular dispositions and thus adapted to the treatment site. This configuration is in particular then advantageous if the edge of the hood-form guard body is non-symmetrical with regard to the axis of rotation, e.g. has different edge heights. However, also if edge sections and edge recesses are arranged on the edge of the hood-form guard body, these can be displaced into desired positions by means of a rotary displacement. An advantageous further development consists e.g. in providing a segment-form edge section on one~~

side, which for a treatment is moved into a certain circumferential position, in which it protects the region lying therebehind from being acted upon with the abrasive flow medium. In the case of the treatment of a tooth it is e.g. advantageous to move the segment-like edge section into such a circumferential position in which it is located in front of a region to be protected, e.g. in front of the tooth pocket edge and in this position can protect the tooth pocket from being acted upon with the treatment medium.

With the another configuration, according to claim 13 there are provided a plurality of different guard bodies, which are selectively connectable indirectly or directly with the handpiece. Through this, in each case one of a plurality of guard bodies can be connected and used with the handpiece which is particularly suitable for the treatment concerned, e.g. having a particular form or size. It is e.g. advantageous to provide a plurality of splash guard parts the free height of which is different and which can be put to use depending upon the medical requirements.

With the another embodiment configuration, according to claim 15 the splash guard is connected with a cannula, preferably releasably connected with the handpiece or with a grip part of the handpiece, by means of a screw connection. A screw connection distinguishes itself through a great stability which also ensures a reliable connection in that the screw connection is tightened with a rotary tension and is thereby positioned in its respective screw end disposition in a self-locking manner.

In further subclaims there are other embodiments, features which relate to flow openings of the splash guard or to splash guard pins or segments present between the flow openings. A yieldable arrangement of the pins or segments is particularly advantageous in order to prevent a blocking of the free space and to make possible the yielding of at least one of the splash guard parts present. This can be achieved in that

the splash guard parts are formed by means of elongate bodies, which e.g. are arranged in the manner of pins or in a brush-like manner directly neighboring one another or may have a spacing from one another and are overall elastically flexible or are elastically flexible at a joint, which is e.g. constituted in the form of a film hinge.

The paragraph beginning on page 7, line 25 have been deleted as follows:

~~Below, advantageous configurations of the invention will be described in more detail with reference to preferred exemplary embodiments. There is shown~~

~~Fig. 1 a medical or dental medical handpiece in accordance with the invention, having a splash guard in accordance with the invention, which e.g. is releasably connected with a cannula of the handpiece;~~

~~Fig. 2 the cannula in an enlarged representation, in longitudinal section;~~

~~Fig. 3 the splash guard as an individual part, in axial section;~~

~~Fig. 4 the end region of a cannula and a splash guard in modified configuration, in axial section;~~

~~Fig. 5 the cannula and the splash guard according to Fig. 4, in a direction of view towards the outlet;~~

~~Fig. 6 the end region of a cannula and a splash guard in a further modified configuration;~~

~~Fig. 7 the cannula in the splash guard according to Fig. 6, in a direction of view towards the outlet;~~

~~Fig. 8 the end region of a cannula and a splash guard in a further modified configuration, in axial section;~~

~~Fig. 9 the cannula and the splash guard according to Fig. 8, in a direction of view towards the outlet;~~

~~Fig. 10 the end region of a cannula and a splash guard in a further modified configuration, in axial section;~~

~~Fig. 11 the cannula and the splash guard according to Fig. 10, in a direction of view towards the outlet;~~

~~Fig. 12 the end region of a cannula and a splash guard releasably fixed thereon, in modified configuration, in axial section;~~

~~Fig. 13 a splash guard according to Fig. 12, in a direction of view towards its outlet;~~

~~Fig. 14 the splash guard according to Fig. 12, in a view from the front;~~

~~Fig. 15 the splash guard according to Fig. 12, in a view from the exterior;~~

~~Fig. 16 the end region of a cannula and a splash guard, in axial section in a further modified configuration;~~

~~Fig. 17 the end region of a cannula and a splash guard releasably fixed thereon in a further modified configuration, in section;~~

~~Fig. 18 the end region of a cannula and a splash guard releasably fixed thereon, in further modified configuration, in axial partial section.~~

~~In the case of the exemplary embodiments described below, the same or similar parts are provided with the same reference signs.~~